

GUIDELINES ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR THE COUNTRIES OF THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY



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This guideline is designed for civil society organisations and people interested in contributing to the protection of the environment and climate change. It provides insight on the EU circular economy policies past, present and future and gives a reader opportunity to build capacities in circular economy advocacy and policy work. If you are from a country aspiring for membership in the European Union and you seek to understand opportunities provided by the process, or influence your national circular economy and other related policies, strategies and systems, read on.

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1. Overview

The circular economy has been spreading around the member states of the European Union since 2015 when the First Circular Economy Action Plan was adopted by the European Commission. Since then, the Second Circular Economy Action Plan was adopted in March 2020. It is one of the main blocks of the European Green Deal, Europe's new agenda for sustainable growth.

Since 2015, many organisations all around Europe have been established to help accelerate the transition towards the circular economy. Many of these organisations are non-governmental organisations which work on legislative changes, connecting stakeholders, awareness-raising and creating tools for switching towards the circular economy. These organisations play an inevitable role in the change of how we use our natural resources.

Preserving natural sources is one of the key steps towards the carbon-neutral future and preventing climate change. This is why the circular economy is one of the key instruments for a sustainable future.

The EU has developed a policy to support the gradual integration of the Western Balkan countries with the Union. On the first of July 2013, Croatia became the first of the seven countries to join. Montenegro, Serbia, the Republic of North Macedonia and Albania are official candidates. Accession negotiations and chapters have been opened with Montenegro and Serbia. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are potential candidate countries. Turkey is also a candidate country.

One of the key instruments for their transition is the environmental policy. The circular economy is one of the key instruments in this transition.

Picture:

MAP EU/Western Balkans + Turkey



2. Introduction

As mentioned in the overview, the circular economy plays a key role in the European Green Deal. The circular economy is also a very important part of the environmental policy. That is why it is necessary to implement circular economy principles in countries which are official candidates or countries in accession negotiations for becoming EU member states.

Non-governmental organisations play one of the key roles in the transition process to the circular economy.

This guideline was created as a useful tool for transition to the circular economy in Western Balkan countries and Turkey, and to help NGOs in these countries. It includes inspirational examples of the activities of NGOs from all across Europe.

To become more familiar with the situation, we asked the group of NGOs from the Western Balkans and Turkey to help us define the situation and the challenges in each of the countries. ENV.net network was very helpful in this step. ENV.net, an active regional network and advocacy actor of five years, has started working on the “ENV.NET FACTORING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PORTFOLIO FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY IN THE EU POLICY AGENDA”. This action aims to work on improving evidence-based policy-making and policy-influencing in the field of climate change and the environmental legislation in each of the ENV.net partner countries:

- » Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development (Albania),
- » Environmental Ambassadors for Sustainable Development (Serbia),
- » Green Home (Montenegro),
- » 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges (Republic of North Macedonia),
- » Advocacy Training Resources Center (Kosovo),
- » LIR Evolution (Bosnia and Herzegovina),
- » TEMA (Turkey),
- » European Environmental Bureau (Belgium),
- » Sud (Italy).

The network aims to generate a region-representative evidence-supported input to contribute to EU discussions on the issues of climate change and the environment and to explore and introduce to the region new inter-related aspects, such as the circular economy. In the process, the network foresees to also technically and financially support civil society organisations and media in each of the network partner countries to help them gain better understanding of these issues and work on them further.

As the first step, we contacted the regional partners and introduced the concept of the guidelines on their common network event in October. We set up the next steps. In the second step, we sent them a questionnaire on the situation in their countries and conducted on-line interviews with each partner at the beginning of November. Our regional contributors were the following:

- » Rodion GJOKA (Co-Plan Institute for Habitat Development, Albania), <http://www.co-plan.org/en/>,
- » Medina Garić, Slaviša Jelisić, (LIR, Bosnia and Herzegovina), <http://lir.ba>,
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After gathering all information from the questionnaire and the interviews, we created country profiles for each of the countries focused on in this guideline.

In the next step, we looked closely at 15 good examples of different NGOs from the EU member states and described their activities as an example of what could be also done in the Western Balkan countries and Turkey to help to boost the circular economy. As a result of analysing this information, we offered proposals of actions for NGOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey for accelerating the circular economy.

3. Circular economy

The circular economy (often referred to as „circularity“) is an economic system aimed at minimising the use of resource inputs and the creation of waste, pollution and carbon emissions, reusing, sharing, repairing, refurbishing, remanufacturing and recycling to create a closed-loop system. The circular economy aims to keep products, equipment and infrastructure in use for longer, thus improving the productivity of these resources. All ‘waste’ should become ‘source’ for another process: either a by-product or recovered resource for another industrial process or as regenerative resources for nature (e.g. compost). This regenerative approach is in contrast to the traditional linear economy, which takes a ‘take, make, dispose of’ model of production.



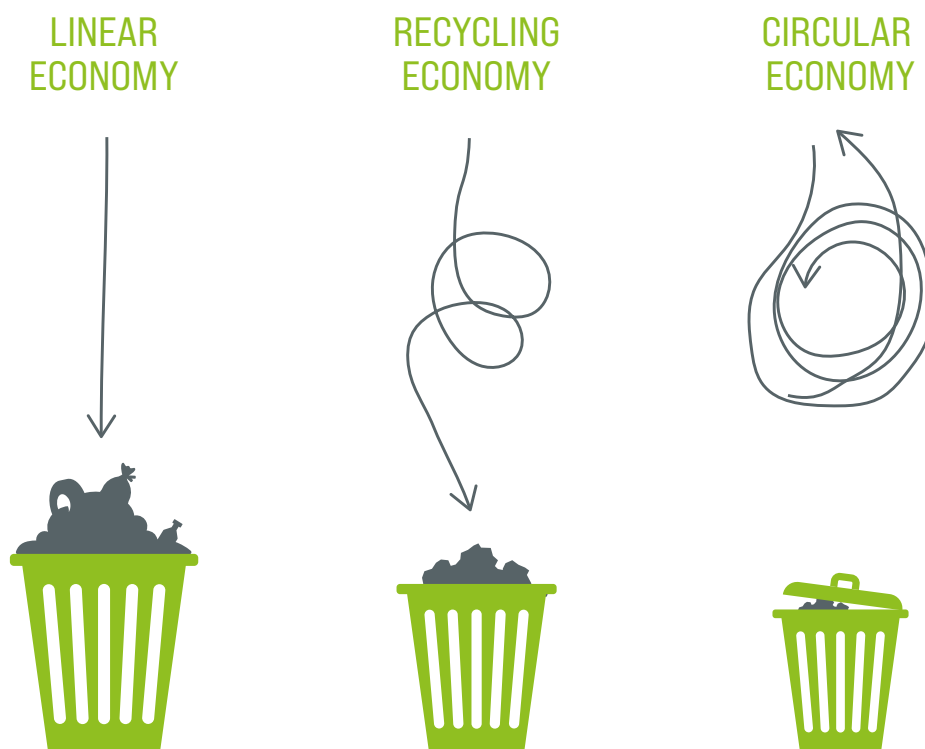
Intuitively, the circular economy would appear to be more sustainable than the current linear economic system. Reducing the resources used, and the waste and leakage created, conserves resources and helps reduce environmental pollution. Reduction of resource use also translates into reductions of GHG emissions and less pressure on natural ecosystems.

In the circular economy, economic activity builds and rebuilds overall system health. The concept recognises the importance of the economy needing to work effectively at all scales – for large and small businesses, for organisations and individuals, globally and locally.

Transitioning to the circular economy does not only amount to adjustments aimed at reducing the negative impacts of the linear economy. Rather, it represents a systemic shift that builds long-term resilience, generates business and economic opportunities, and provides environmental and societal benefits.

Technical and biological cycles

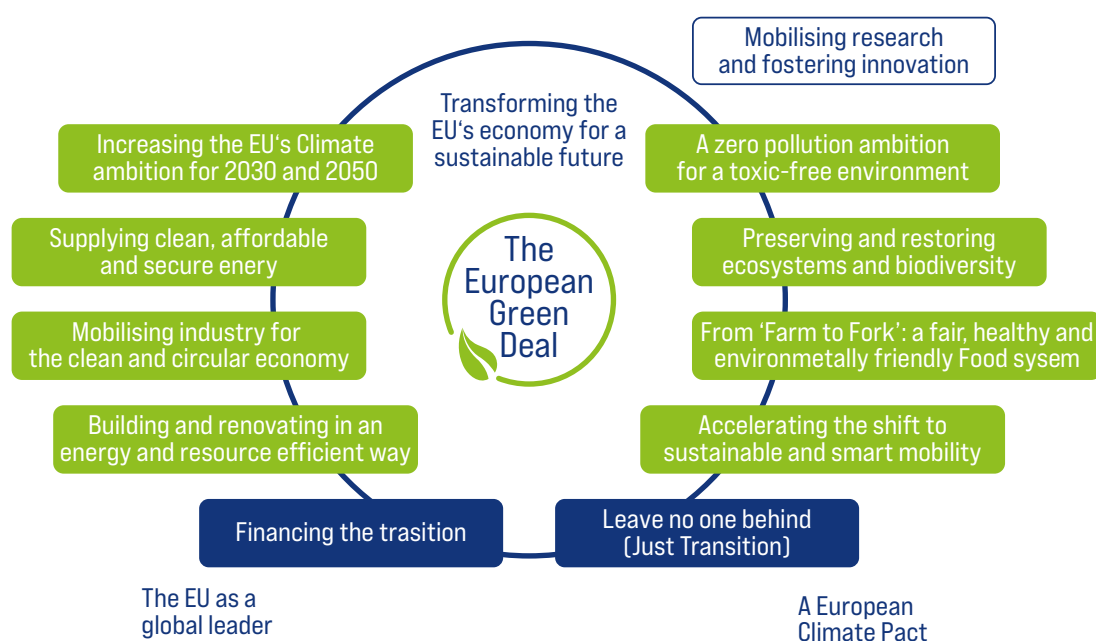
The model distinguishes between technical and biological cycles. Consumption happens only in biological cycles, where food and biologically-based materials (such as cotton or wood) are designed to feed back into the system through processes like composting and anaerobic digestion. These cycles regenerate living systems, such as soil, which provide renewable resources for the economy. Technical cycles recover and restore products, components, and materials through strategies like reuse, repair, remanufacture or (in the last resort) recycling.



Wider European circular economy framework

The circular economy is one of the main blocks of the **European Green Deal (EGD)**, the European Union's new agenda for sustainable growth. The EGD (December 2019) sets an ambitious roadmap towards the climate-neutral circular economy, where economic growth is decoupled from resource use. The EGD covers key sectors and consists of an action plan in several policy areas as described in Figure 1. Synergies between the policies are key to the EGD and are inevitable for the transformation to be successful.

Figure 1: The European Green Deal and its elements.



Source: European Commission, 2019

The twin green and digital transitions remain to be the flagship initiatives of the European Commission (2019-2024) and **cornerstones of the major recovery plan for Europe** to help relaunch the EU economy and repair the economic and social damage brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moving towards the EU circular economy is bound by pursuing the objectives of increasing resource efficiency, reducing waste generation and using waste as a resource. The overview of selected key EU policy objectives and targets related to waste and resources as well as their binding force is described in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Overview of selected EU policy objectives and targets related to waste and resources

Policy objectives and targets	Sources	Target year	Agreement
Resource use and efficiency			
Improve resource efficiency	7th EAP (EU, 2013); Roadmap to a resource efficient Europe (EC, 2011a)	2020	Non-binding commitments
Strive towards an absolute decoupling of economic growth and environmental degradation	7th EAP (EU, 2013)	2020	Non-binding commitments
Create more with less, deliver greater value with less input, use resources in a sustainable way and minimise their impacts on the environment	7th EAP (EU, 2013)	2050	Non-binding commitments
Achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources	SDG 12.2 (global, national) (UN, 2015); 7th EAP (EU, 2013)	2030	Non-binding commitments
Waste generation and management			
50%/55%/60%/65% of municipal waste is prepared for reuse or recycled (differing calculation method for the 50% target)	Waste Framework Directive (EU, 2008, 2018b)	2020/2025/2030/2035	Legally binding
Reduce landfill of biodegradable municipal waste to 75%/50%/35% of the same waste generated in 1995	Landfill Directive (EU, 1999)	2006/2009/2013	Legally binding
Reduce landfill to a maximum of 10% of municipal waste generated	Landfill Directive (EU, 1999, 2018a)	2035	Legally binding
Specific targets for collection, recycling and/or recovery of packaging waste, construction and demolition waste, WEEE, end-of-life vehicles, batteries, single-use plastics (incl. market restrictions and requirements for recycled content)	Waste Framework Directive (EU, 2008, 2018b), Packaging Waste Directive (EU, 1994, 2018c), WEEE Directive (EU, 2000), ELV Directive (EU, 2000), Batteries Directive (EU, 2006), Single-use Plastics Directive (EU, 2019b))	2008-2035	Legally binding
All plastic packaging should be recyclable	EU plastics strategy (EC, 2018a)	2030	Non-binding commitments
Waste generation to decline absolutely and per capita, and reduction and sound management of hazardous waste	7th EAP (EU, 2013)	2020	Non-binding commitments
Energy recovery to be limited to non-recyclable waste	7th EAP (EU, 2013)	2020	Non-binding commitments
Halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses	SDG 12.3 (UN, 2015)	2030	Non-binding commitments

Note: 7th EAP, Seventh Environment Action Programme; ELV Directive, End-of-life Vehicles Directive; WEEE Directive, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive.

Source: The European environment – state and outlook 2020, European Environment Agency, p. 215

Policy landscape of 2015 and 2020 Circular Economy Action Plans

The first and second Circular Economy Action Plans introduce both legislative and non-legislative measures aiming at boosting the circular economy. While the majority of legislative measures from the first package have already entered or are about to enter into force soon, the legislative measures, indicated in the new (second) Circular Economy Action Plan, are to be presented by the European Commission. Once the European Commission presents its proposal, the two co-legislators (Council of the EU and the European Parliament) coordinate their positions within their institutions and subsequently have to approve the identical text of the legislation and adopt it jointly.

First Circular Economy Action Plan

The first circular economy package (December 2015) embedded measures focused on the areas from production and consumption to waste management and the market for secondary raw materials, as well as cross-cutting issues such as innovations and investments. Over the 2016-2020 period, more than 10 billion EUR of European public funding was allocated to the transition. A set of ten key indicators covering each phase of the lifecycle of products, as well as the competitiveness aspect, created the first EU monitoring framework for the circular economy. Under the new (2020) Circular Economy Action Plan, the framework will be updated in 2021 to reflect new policy priorities and develop further indicators on resource use, including consumption and material footprint.

The EU has not yet set quantitative targets for the use of resources or improvements in resource productivity, although some member states have set national targets in their strategies. In the recent years, policies on ensuring the security of supply of raw materials, and in particular access to critical raw materials, increasingly address resource use.

Circular design and production processes

Circularity means adapting industrial processes. For industrial facilities, the Industrial Emissions Directive requires improving material efficiency and reducing waste generation. However, the related best available techniques conclusions currently contain no binding provisions in this field. The review of the Directive, including the integration of the circular economy practices in upcoming Best Available Techniques reference documents, is expected in 2021 as part of the new circular economy action plan. Ecodesign and energy labelling measures for several products now include rules on material efficiency requirements, such as availability of spare parts, ease of repair and facilitating end-of-life treatment.

In the construction sector, a voluntary European Framework for sustainable buildings, so-called 'Level(s)' has been opened, created in a testing phase in spring 2018 and should be launched in autumn 2020.

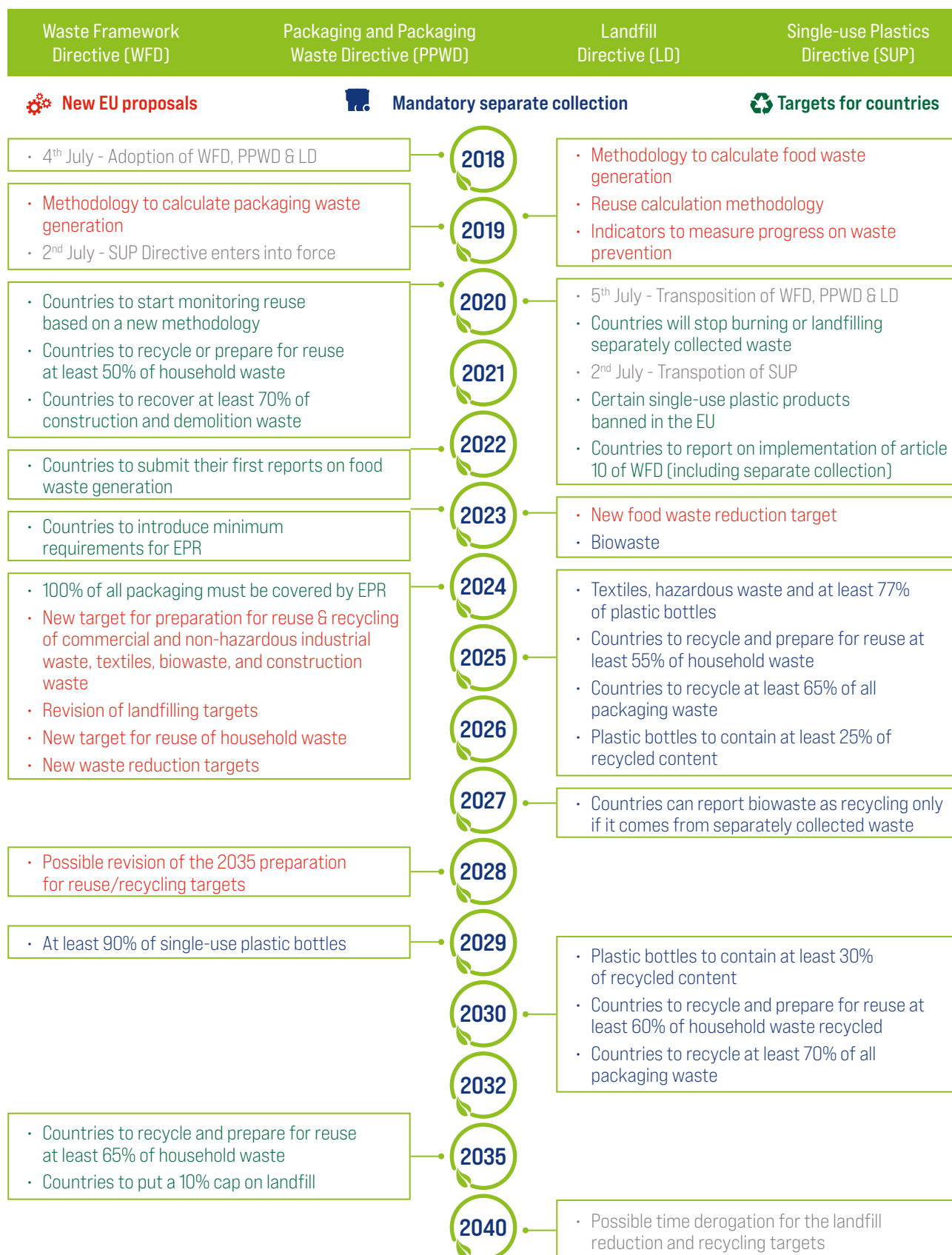
Turning waste into resources

The waste hierarchy is the overarching principle of the EU waste policies (Art. 4 of the Waste Framework Directive) in which waste prevention has the highest priority, followed by preparing for reuse, recycling and other recovery and finally disposal as the least desirable option.

EU waste legislation includes more than 30 binding targets for waste management for the period of 2015-2035. The revised EU legislative framework on waste has entered into force in July 2018 and its key elements include:

- » a common EU target for recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2035,
- » a binding landfill target to reduce landfill to a maximum of 10% of municipal waste by 2035,
- » a common EU target for recycling 70% of packaging waste by 2030,
- » there are also recycling targets for specific packaging materials:
 - » paper and cardboard: 85%
 - » ferrous metals: 80%
 - » aluminium: 60%
 - » glass: 75%
 - » plastic: 55%
 - » wood: 30%,
- » separate collection obligations are strengthened and extended to bio-waste (by end 2023), textiles (by end 2025) and hazardous household waste (by end of 2022),
- » minimum requirements for extended producer responsibility schemes were established to improve their governance and cost-efficiency,
- » ban on incineration and landfilling of separately collected waste.

A timeline for the EU's transition to the circular economy



Even though the EU legislation has not yet included waste prevention targets, the EU member states are obliged to take measures on waste prevention, including food waste and plastic bags and to report on reuse. The Art. 9 of the Waste Framework Directive obliges the EU member states (MS) to reduce the generation of waste, in particular waste that is not suitable for preparing for reuse and recycling. Any new national legislative proposals and strategies, and the implementation of existing ones, need to adhere to the EU waste hierarchy and make waste prevention top priority. The Art. 4 of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive prescribes measures to prevent the generation of plastic packaging and Art. 5 prescribes measures to encourage an increase in the share of reusable packaging placed on the market.

MS are obliged to adopt waste prevention programmes (Article 29 WFD) incorporating at least those waste prevention measures which are listed in Article 9 WFD. MS shall also adopt specific programmes relating to food waste. Waste prevention programmes must be evaluated at least every six years.

Closing loops of recovered materials

The EU member states will be obliged to implement the legislation setting minimum requirements for reused water for agricultural irrigation.

The new Fertilising Products Regulation introduced harmonised rules for organic fertilisers manufactured from secondary raw materials such as agricultural by-products and recovered bio-waste.

A systemic approach

In 2018, the European Commission adopted the EU Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy, the first EU-wide policy framework adopting a material-specific lifecycle approach to integrate circular design, reuse and recycling activities into the plastics value chain. The strategy set out that inter alia by 2030, all plastic packaging placed on the EU market is reusable or recyclable. The European Commission aims to boost plastic recycling inside the EU to 10 million tones by 2025 (+150% compared to 2015). Therefore, it supported the initiative Circular Plastics Alliance covering the full product cycle of plastics with around 180 organisations from the industry, academia and public authorities. As part of the waste prevention policy framework, the EU Member States' governments will also have to introduce legal measures addressing single-use plastic items (with differentiated dates for transposition of the EU law into their national law). The Single-use Plastics Directive, part of the EU Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy introduces, inter alia:

- » a ban on certain plastic products (where alternatives exist on the market: cotton buds, cutlery, plates, straws, drink stirrers, sticks for balloons as well as cups, food and beverage containers made of expanded polystyrene and on all products made of oxo-degradable plastic),
- » measures to reduce consumption of food containers and beverage cups made of plastic and specific marking and labelling of certain products,
- » the target for recycled content of plastic drink bottles (25% in PET bottles as of 2025 and 30% in all bottles as of 2030),
- » the target for separate collection of single-use plastic drinks bottles (77% by 2025, 90% by 2029),
- » extended producer responsibility schemes for tobacco filters and fishing gear.

New Circular Economy Action Plan

Building on the first circular economy package, the new European Green Deal's Circular Economy Action Plan (March 2020) puts an accent on the design and production for the circular economy. The focus on important value chains is expanded and strengthened. According to the second action plan, the European Commission will launch concrete actions in the sectors which use the most resources and where the potential for circularity is high – sector of electronics and ICT, batteries and vehicles, packaging,

plastics, textiles, construction and buildings, and food. Actions under the new Circular Economy Action Plan are to be presented by the European Commission according to the timeframe in Figure 3.

The new Circular Economy Action Plan is making waste prevention measures a top priority. Rolling out the sustainable product policy and translating it into specific legislation will be key to making progress on waste prevention, while new waste reduction targets for specific streams as part of a broader set of measures on waste prevention, as well as specific targets for cutting food waste and residual waste streams, are expected to be presented. Cross-cutting actions ensuring synergies are even more accentuated than in the first circular economy package from 2015.

Figure 3: New Circular Economy Action Plan (2020) with its measures and timeline

A sustainable product policy framework	
Legislative proposal for a sustainable product policy initiative	2021
Legislative proposal empowering consumers in the green transition	2020
Legislative and non-legislative measures establishing a new "right to repair"	2021
Legislative proposal on substantiating green claims	2020
Mandatory Green Public Procurement (GPP) criteria and targets in sectoral legislation and phasing-in mandatory reporting on GPP	as of 2021
Review of the Industrial Emissions Directive, including the integration of circular economy practices in upcoming Best Available Techniques reference documents	as of 2021
Launch of an industry-led industrial symbiosis reporting and certification system	2022
Key product value chains	
Circular Electronics Initiative, common charger solution, and reward systems to return old devices	2020/2021
Review of the Directive on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment and guidance to clarify its links with REACH and Ecodesign requirements	2021
Proposal for a new regulatory framework for batteries	2020
Review of the rules on end-of-life vehicles	2021
Review of the rules on proper treatment of waste oils	2022
Review to reinforce the essential requirements for packaging and reduce (over)packaging and packaging waste	2021
Mandatory requirements on recycled plastic content and plastic waste reduction measures for key products such as packaging, construction materials and vehicles	2021/2022
Restriction of intentionally added microplastics and measures on unintentional release of microplastics	2021
Policy framework for bio-based plastics and biodegradable or compostable plastics	2021
EU Strategy for Textiles	2021
Strategy for a Sustainable Built Environment	2021
Initiative to substitute single-use packaging, tableware and cutlery by reusable products in food services	2021

Less waste, more value	
Waste reduction targets for specific streams and other measures on waste prevention	2022
EU-wide harmonised model for separate collection of waste and labelling to facilitate separate collection	2022
Methodologies to track and minimise the presence of substances of concern in recycled materials and articles made thereof	2021
Harmonised information systems for the presence of substances of concern	2021
Scoping the development of further EU-wide end-of-waste and by-product criteria	2021
Revision of the rules on waste shipments	2021
Making the circular economy work for people, regions and cities	
Supporting the circular economy transition through the Skills Agenda, the forthcoming Action Plan for Social Economy, the Pact for Skills and the European Social Fund Plus	as of 2020
Supporting the circular economy transition through Cohesion Policy Funds, the Just Transition Mechanism and urban initiatives	as of 2020
Cross-cutting actions	
Improving measurement, modelling and policy tools to capture synergies between the circular economy and climate change mitigation and adaptation at the EU and national level	as of 2020
Regulatory framework for the certification of carbon removals	2023
Reflecting circular economy objectives in the revision of the guidelines on state aid in the field of environment and energy	2021
Mainstreaming circular economy objectives in the context of the rules on non-financial reporting, and initiatives on sustainable corporate governance and on environmental accounting	2020/2021
Leading efforts at the global level	
Leading efforts towards reaching a global agreement on plastics	as of 2020
Proposing a Global Circular Economy Alliance, and initiating discussions on an international agreement on the management of natural resources	as of 2021
Mainstreaming circular economy objectives in free trade agreements, in bilateral, regional and multilateral processes and agreements, and in EU external policy funding instruments	as of 2020
Monitoring the progress	
Updating the Circular Economy Monitoring Framework to reflect new policy priorities and develop further indicators on resource use, including consumption and material footprints	2021

Source: European Commission, 2020

4. COUNTRY PROFILES

ALBANIA

Albania started to set up its goals in the field of the circular economy through the changes of legislation in the field of waste management or sustainable energy. Most of the changes are happening on the level of the private sector, but the development is very slow. One of the biggest challenges in the transition to the circular economy is the waste management system. It requires dramatic change on the national and regional level in the field of building infrastructure and closing the loops of the materials.

Production of municipal waste in 2019 was 1 200 000 tonnes which represent 381 kg of municipal waste per capita per year (90.4% managed and 9.6% not managed).

The recycling rate is 18.7%

- » 78% of waste deposited in landfills,
- » 2.4% of waste illegally dumped in uncontrolled areas,
- » 0.9% of waste incinerated.

34% of the overall amount of waste generated per year is considered recyclable

- » Declared capacity from the privately-owned recycling industry could cover 80% of the above-mentioned amount.
- » Paper, glass, metals, wood, biomass.

In Albania, seven legal landfills (not sanitary) and 285 (illegal dumpsites) are operated. There is also one operative incinerator and two others are under construction.

Activities made towards reducing waste

- » an initiative to formalise by law the ban of single-use plastics (abolished),
- » local campaigns but very limited in their outcomes and sustainability,
- » no segregation country-wise,
- » composting is a primitive practice, occurring only in the backyards of households dealing with agriculture.

Legislation

- » no act or a dedicated legislation requiring a transition to the circular economy,
- » no subvention or support for those who reduce, reuse or recycle waste,
- » overall, the waste framework is transposed by local legislation at a level of 54% whereas in full we have transposed the 86/278/EEC Sewage Sludge, 96/59/EC PCB/PCT, 2006/66/EC Batteries, 1999/31/EC Landfilling and 94/62/EC Packaging. On the other hand, the implementation of our legislation is in overall below 24% due to the lack of investment, and the lack of both human and technical capacities in place (at the local and central levels), recently approved new WM National Strategy. For the first time in an official document, we can find present the term 'circular economy', but without defining any targets.

Main obstacles for the transition to the circular economy

- » rather poor buy-in of the theory and benefits by the major society and the private sector,
- » lack of substantial support from the central and local governments,
- » sectorial plans in fields such as energy, mobility, industry, waste, air, water etc. are not cross-consulted, which results in them having different objectives and road-maps.

Waste management financing on the municipal level is implemented through a tax for public services and an annual budget amendment.

Circular economy activities by Co-PLAN organisation

- » 2nd Regional Conference on Circular Economy for the Western Balkans in Tirana implemented as part of the ENV.NET project,
- » Western Balkans Status Report on the Circular Economy drafted and published online,
- » Western Balkans Status Report on the Circular Economy III to be published in December 2020,
- » appearance in national media in which the circular economy has been discussed more than five times throughout 2020,
- » forces joined with the Qarkonomia project in Albania to perfect their baseline studies focused on the level of public perception of the circular economy.

Co-PLAN also financially supported three local civil society organisations to conduct mapping of circular economy initiatives, prepare reports, policy briefs and organise meetings.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Country of Bosnia and Herzegovina is dealing the most with illegal waste treatment and illegal landfills all around the country. There is a great wish to start the process of waste prevention and waste sorting to keep the beautiful nature of this country for future generations.

Inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina produce 3,25 mil. tons of waste per year or 354 kg of municipal waste per capita.

The recycling rate is at a very low level and represents only 0,29%.

Waste on legal landfills represents 75,6%, waste on illegal dumpsites 23,9%, sanitary landfills: 7 (47% of habitats covered with services) Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zenica, Bihać, Banja Luka, Bijeljina (one in Mostar does not operate yet).

There are 84 municipal unregulated dumpsites and according to Agency for Statistics (CSOs counted over 1100 illegal dumpsites), there are over 850 illegal dumpsites all around Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Majority of wastes are just disposed of, not in line with a proper waste management.

Recycling materials: paper, plastic, glass – collected by private companies and mainly exported (a low percentage is used for recycling and reuse).

The Municipality of Bosanski Petrovac started the project for a waste incinerator of medical and animal origin waste, which should be built on the site of the city landfill Vaganac, where all municipal waste is currently disposed. This information has been confirmed by, Dejan Prošić, the Municipality Mayor, who pointed out that they had also found a strategic partner in the implementation of the project – a company entitled Zanni from the Municipality of Lukavac. The approval for the project was given by the Muni-

pal Council of Bosanski Petrovac. The study showed that there would be no negative environmental effects, while the expected benefit is a solution for these types of wastes and employment of a minimum of 12 workers. The municipal councillors advised not to build this kind of a facility, as the health of inhabitants could be endangered by the incineration and chemical reactions. Furthermore, they stated that communal waste poses a more significant problem which currently also lacks a solution. At the end, it was decided not to build incineration facility.

Activities made towards reducing waste

Activities on waste reduction are small-scale. Several companies reuse and create new products from collected recycled materials. There are five waste sorting lines installed: Mostar, Konjic, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Doboj (separated dry recyclable from mixed waste).

Practices within the country

Company	Activities
EKOPAK Sarajevo	Green Dot License (each piece of packaging pays for its own disposal); the leading operator of the packaging waste (industries, agriculture)
Aida Commerce	Purchasing and recycling of electronic and electrical equipment; PET packaging and plastics; storage, transportation and recycling of medical waste
ALBA	The leader in recycling and environmental management (21 cities and towns in FBiH and 11 in RS). Collaboration with companies: Robot, FIS, Prevent, Azel France, Konzum, Vispak, BEST, Konjic Karton, Mega Markets (recycling of waste paper, foil, glass, plastic, electrical and electronic waste and edible oil waste)
ZEOS Eco system	System of electrical and electronic waste management in BiH Since October 2020, the authorised operator for disposal of electrical and electronic waste entitled ZEOS eco-system has been conducting an environmental-educational campaign „Where I Buy, There I Recycle“. The campaign is organised through a collection network of 12 socially responsible companies: Bau&Garten (OBI), BINGO, Elektro Centar, ELEKTRO-JURIĆ, ELEKTRO MILAS, ELMARK GROUP, Gorenje Commerce, KONZUM, MANEDRA-COMPANY, Mercator BH, Orbiter G and Penny Plus. The campaign aims to raise awareness and inform the general public about the option of disposing of electrical and electronic waste in vertical containers which can be found in the mentioned stores. In this manner, citizens get the opportunity to actively participate in reducing pollution from EE waste.
CBOS	Metal waste recycling; alternative fuel production - used in cement plants
FORTIN d.o.o. Tesanj	Transport and recycling of scrap metal
BH RECYCLING	Recycling of scrap metal
GRIZELJ Sarajevo	Production of waste treatment equipment
ADRA, Mozaik	“Textile bread” – a social project of collecting used clothes

Elektro Tim Company, Banja Luka	Dealing with innovative decorative lighting for streets and holiday decorations of public areas. Their new project is entitled "From Waste to Jobs", in which they plan to collect plastic waste (from streets, waste dumps, riverbanks), to recycle it and to develop new items, such as decorative lighting and New Year's decorations. The plan for the year 2020 is to collect 90.000,00 plastic bottles and to create 500 decorations.
"23. Mart", Podlugovi	They buy raw materials from regional meat industries and export it. In Turkey, as well as other countries in Asia, the products of this company are very popular as food, although it is waste to us. In BiH people eat meat, and in those exporting countries, people also eat legs and ligaments and other products obtained by processing by-products of the meat industry. Instead of destroying and throwing away meat waste, most can be used and processed and exported where it is used. The company "23. Mart" solves some of the modern problems such as recycling food waste. It employs hard-to-employ citizens from several municipalities, such as Ilijaš, Visoko, Breza, and others. Currently, this company employs about 20 workers, and new employments are planned.
"Omorika Recycling", Dobo	The company uses highly automated process lines, with a constant improvement and work on the establishment of the state-of-the-art quality control laboratory. Hence, it sets an excellent example to others. The factory, which currently has 51 employees, maintains its production at a solid level despite the pandemic, taking careful hygiene measures. Habits of PET and other polymers recycling are still not sufficiently promoted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite many existing 'recycling stations' (special waste separation containers located in schoolyards and large buildings). Many people are sceptical about recycling and are mistaken in thinking that even separated waste is dumped into city landfills. This is a harmful prejudice, given that "Omorika Recycling" experiences a great demand, and currently imports part of the waste. Since this factory exports 97% of its final products as a result of their excellent quality, it presents an example of a best practice in PET recycling.

In December 2019, the investor entitled Medic otp submitted a request for approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the project of a plant for thermal treatment of hazardous waste in the settlement of Karakaj in the City of Zvornik, which was put on public review from the 31st of January to 31st of March 2020. At the public hearing in Zvornik, concern was expressed about the justification of the project and a large number of questions were raised but not resolved, as the investor did not attend the hearing. The plant will not be built, because the RS Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and Ecology rejected the request of the Medic otp company for construction, after having identified shortcomings which make the project unfounded for the continuation of the procedure. The main reason for the rejection of the request was the location of the incinerator in the settlement of Karakaj with a population of 2,828 people.

In 2020, the civic initiative entitled Because It Concerns Us (orig. Jer nas se tiče) set up educational and promotional stands at two locations in Mostar where citizens could sign a petition to close the waste landfill Uborak near the city. By signing the petition, citizens support the closure of the existing landfill Uborka and opening the landfill in a new location, which will not endanger the health and life of Mostar citizens. The initiative is organised to educate the population about the harmful effects of the landfill on the City of Mostar and the inhabitants of the Neretva Valley. The information collected is also about the interest of Mostar residents in moving landfill from to a more suitable location.

In the City of Neum, local authorities jointly with GIZ support are setting up 15 locations for separated waste collection. Waste will be collected in separate waste bins, specifically for paper, plastic and metal. The activity is implemented within the project entitled Integrated Waste Management & Marine Litter Prevention in the Western Balkans. The project will contribute to an improvement of awareness on prevention of marine waste and increased awareness on the importance of environmental protection.

As part of the project promotion, a presentation for citizens and educational activities at kindergartens and schools will be organised, to inform and instruct citizens how to separately dispose of waste.

Legislation

The introduction of extended producer responsibility for packaging and packaging waste in the FBiH and RS, and electronic and electrical waste in the FBiH, is the first step in the transition to the circular economy in BiH. Waste-related legislation does not know or use the term 'circular economy'. Still, the set goals are related to CE principles: waste prevention, composting, green procurement, promotion of sustainable construction, product eco-design, and environmental protection in general (laws and bylaws on waste management, environmental protection).

The law on waste management of Republika Srpska (2013, Amendment 2018, as the EU Directive 2008/98/EZ on waste was changed) incorporated new terms: reuse of products, green backyards, programme of producers extended responsibility, recycling yard, waste management centre and unregulated waste disposal site. The responsibility is bared by local self-government units (cities and municipalities).

Obligations: development of separate waste collection systems, collection of all types of waste, identifying locations for recycling yards, green yards and landfills, cleaning and rehabilitation of illegal wild dumpsites, organising educational and public awareness-raising waste management campaigns, organising public cleaning activities. The producer is required to use technology and develop the production in a manner which ensures a rational use of natural resources, encourages reuse, returnable packaging and product recycling, and promotes the environmentally sustainable management of natural resources.

Main obstacles to the transition to the circular economy

Bosnia and Herzegovina, entity and district laws, bylaws and policies must incorporate and transpose the upgraded Directives on the circular economy .

Bosnia and Herzegovina is still without waste market (waste collectors repurchase plastic, paper and metal, and set their own prices, mainly those in export).

The circular economy concept is recognised but still needs to be developed and integrated into the whole circular process as a new system (not just one activity) – for citizens as consumers and users, and companies as producers and re-producers.

Financing the waste management in municipalities

Generally, waste management is in the jurisdiction of municipalities. Municipal utility companies are in charge of the organisation of the municipal waste collection, transport and disposal. Very often municipalities additionally cover costs for waste management in the form of grants to municipal waste utility companies. Citizens pay waste disposal per square meters of living space (not per number of persons).

Circular economy activities by LIR

The LIR participates in EU funded projects and implements them at the local level, promoting the circular economy: "ENV.net Factoring the Environmental Portfolio for the Western Balkans and Turkey in the EU Policy Agenda" (2018-2020, Programme: "Consolidating Regional Thematic Networks of Civil Society Organisations") which represents starting point for the circular economy promotion by the LIR. Project entitled ENV.net focuses on promoting principles of the circular economy, contributing to the improvement of environmental policy-making and its implementation in compliance with the EU standards. This project introduced and initiated debate on the circular economy concept in the whole region, as well as intensified climate change actions.

As part of the ENV.net project, a sub-grantee was awarded funds to implement a specific project related to the circular economy entitled “Mapping the Problems of Development and Forms of the Circular Economy in Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The project results are the following: mapping and documentation of asbestos roofs in buildings as an example of the application of the circular economy.

“CIRCLE Circular Innovation and Resilient City Labs in the Adrion Region” (2020-2022, Programme: ADRION) – The project aims to promote waste management/recycling models by raising awareness on practical viability of circular economy principles. It does so through planning and the implementation of a collaborative approach involving an innovation producer, business actors, administrative and financial organism, as well as a civil society within urban areas where the largest amounts of waste are produced and innovative solutions can be implemented.

The LIR supports project partners in new waste management models containing the circular economy principles, and in organisation and implementation of CircLab pilot actions.

KOSOVO

Kosovo is still dealing with a lot of problems with illegal landfills but has some very good examples of good practice which could serve as an inspiration for other regions of this little country.

According to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, the average municipal waste collected in Kosovo in 2019 was 253 kg per capita per year. Hence, the average waste collected per capita per day was 0.69 kg.

In Kosovo, a total of 452 thousand tons of municipal waste were collected in 2019.

Citing the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, during 2019 there were around 429.534 tonnes of waste collected and recycled in 2019, while in 2020, there have been 450.175 tonnes.

There exist no confirmed data on the number of illegal landfills in Kosovo. According to the Let's Do It campaign, in Kosovo, there are more than 1,600 illegal landfills identified. The majority of these illegal landfills are located in villages which are not covered by the public waste management companies.

According to the Kosovo Agency for Statistics, there are some types of recycled and separated waste, such as:

Type of waste	2019	2020
Paper and cardboard waste	136 tonnes	248 tonnes
Metal	1,966 tonnes	2,479 tonnes
Plastic	1,071 tonnes	1,027 tonnes
Organic waste	425,667 tonnes	445,547 tonnes
Medicinal waste	???	874 tonnes
Total	429.534 tonnes	450.175 tonnes

Activities made towards reducing waste

In terms of managing the recycled waste, there are approximately 23 private companies which deal with its treatment. Among the materials which are recycled in Kosovo are paper, metals, batteries and cans. They are exported to the neighbouring countries of Kosovo for recycling.

Kosovo companies are increasingly finding profitable solutions to the visible waste problem in the country. Some companies have found ways to recycle waste and create useful products, which are then exported.

PLASTIKA Company is the first company in Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia which recycles foil and plastic waste as a raw material for the production of foil for agriculture and constructions. They also produce the thermo foil and stretch foil. In December 2017, the company launched a new super-modern line, a 5-layer extruder. This state-of-the-art machinery can produce high-quality stretch hood, stretch film, hood, and agricultural film.

Tiki Mosaic collects glass waste from all over Kosovo and recycles it into beautiful and colourful mosaic tiles. The company successfully presented their mosaics at the first Green Festival organised in Pristina.

Izolimi Plast has found success in recycling plastic waste and using it as insulation material. The company has significantly increased its recycling capacity year after year.

Lastly, AL-TEC became Kosovo's first meat recycling and animal feed production start-up. The company has supply contracts with butchers, farms and meat processors from all over Kosovo to collect their meat and bones waste.

Legislation

The circular economy is not included in the legislation of Kosovo, neither as a notion or terminology, nor a method or practice. The current approved legislation does not address the concept of the circular economy, which, consequently, makes it difficult to implement this process in practice. For this reason, a new legislation needs to be drafted to ensure the inclusion of the relevant concept and terminology of the circular economy, providing facilities to persons and entities (both for-profit and non-profit) which contribute or plan to contribute to stimulating the circular economy in the country.

Main obstacles for the transition to the circular economy

The main obstacles for turning from the linear to the circular economy is the lack of legislation at the national and local level. Secondly, there is a need for awareness raising campaigns to educate the public on how to treat waste, benefit from it and reduce it.

Waste management financing

The Law on Waste allows for the liberalisation of the waste sector by opening the market to private operators in the waste management. However, public enterprises still function, and de facto provide waste management services to municipalities.

In Kosovo, there are seven public companies which cover seven regions of Kosovo. Their main purpose is to collect waste and transport it into sanitary landfills.

The companies are registered and operate as joint stock companies. A municipality or a number of municipalities own shares in these companies.

According to data from the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, approximately 30% of the territory of the country, especially the countryside, is not managed by public companies. This has so far caused the creation of over 1,600 illegal landfills nationwide.

Activities implemented by the ATRC

- » organising research through surveying citizens on the circular economy,
- » organising a regional conference in the Prishtina Municipality on the topic of the circular economy in Kosovo,
- » workshop with students regarding the circular economy.

The ATRC supported two projects through sub-grants: the first focuses on the water management and the second on the circular economy.

REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

To comply with the Circular Economy Package, the Republic of North Macedonia will need to minimise source waste and improve the recycling rate of used products. There is also a great interest in reducing food waste.

The municipal waste generation in 2019 was an average of 456 kg per capita. It had increased by 10.7% compared to 2018. Municipal waste is waste collected by or on behalf of municipal authorities. It consists of waste from households, including the bulky waste, similar waste from commercial and trade industries, from official buildings, institutions and small businesses, waste from gardens, street waste, the content of waste containers and the waste from market cleaning. The State Statistics Office gathers the data on the amount of collected waste via the municipal public enterprises' annual reports. The data on the generated waste is calculated based on estimation. Therefore, the quantities of generated municipal waste per capita in the period between 2010 and 2019 are to be taken as estimates.

Although the recycling of packaging waste produced in North Macedonia is on the rise, most of this waste is not recycled. The EU's circular economy package has set new packaging targets, but they are unlikely to be achieved soon. Later deadlines will be negotiated as part of the accession negotiations.

Recycling rates of municipal waste are still very low

The dominant way in the management of collected municipal and other types of non-hazardous waste is the disposal, i.e. landfilling of the waste at sanitary landfills and active municipal communal non-standard landfills. According to the data of the State Statistical Office, the total amount of collected municipal waste in the Republic of North Macedonia was 632,484 tonnes in 2019. Compared to 2018, the total amount of collected municipal waste decreased by 1.1%. The highest amount of collected municipal waste was registered in the Skopje Region – 164,971 tonnes or 26.1% of the total collected amount in the Republic of North Macedonia. Of the total amount of collected municipal waste, 522,983 tonnes or 83% were collected from households and the remaining 17% from legal and natural persons (commercial waste). By a waste type, the highest amount of collected waste is mixed municipal waste - 542,664 tonnes or 85.8% - , and the lowest amount is rubber waste, which makes 778 tonnes or 0.1% of the total amount of collected waste. Concerning the reported total collected municipal and other non-hazardous waste in 2019, only 0.7% was reported as processed (composted waste, recycled paper, cardboard, glass, plastic and metal), which again shows the tendency of an increase compared to 0.28% in 2013.

Activities made towards reducing waste

- » Set of Rulebooks on Transposing Landfill Directive (1999/31), Set of Rulebooks on eco-labelling (food, chemicals, textile, wood, detergents, tourists accommodation).
- » Rulebook on the form and content of the forms for transboundary waste transfer.
- » Reverse vending machines for plastic and glass bottles in the Municipality of Centar.

- »» "GREEN IDEAS" is an annual competition which supports the development of small, local and green, sustainable business ideas in Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Greece. The regional competition has been held since 2012 as part of a programme for the Western Balkans funded by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (USA). ARNO (Association for Development of New Ideas), for the sixth year in a row, administers the national competition „Green Ideas“ in Macedonia and is proud that so far, the country has regional winners and a total investment of 60,000 dollars for the development of green businesses in the country.
- »» In February 2020, the Fund for Innovation and Technological Development (FITR) organised a consultative debate on the new mechanism for financial support of young innovators. The FITR has prepared a „Rulebook on Financial Support of Scientific and Technological Excellence and Entrepreneurship for Students and Youth“. The draft document aimed to establish such rules under which financial and technical assistance can be provided to talented children and their mentors.
- »» In 2009, the company Sunilens became the first company authorised to collect and recycle waste oils, and market them as ready-made eco-raw materials on the biofuels market in Europe. The company has invested an up-to-date technology, equipment, logistics and human resources to deliver an innovative ecological system for the collection, transport, storage and treatment/recycling of vegetable oils and fats.
- »» Greenteh MK doo is a member of the GREEN GROUP which is the largest recycling group in South-Eastern Europe. Grinteh MK has a recycling plant for waste polyethylene (PE) and polypropylene (PP). Glass: Akron doo is the only company in Macedonia which deals with the treatment of waste glass.
- »» The pallet production plant EkoLife15, located in Ginovce (municipality of Rankovce), was opened in August 2018. In this factory, pellets will be produced according to the highest European standards. They will be made of domestic and foreign raw materials, with a production capacity of up to three tonnes per hour.

Legislation

The new National Waste Management Plan (NWMP) 2020-2030 for the Republic of North Macedonia focuses on finding practical, acceptable and financially feasible solutions and ways to finalise the activities which remained unrealised during the period of the previous NWMP (2009-2015).

The main activities presented in the NWMP 2020-2030 aim to improve the standards for household waste management in the Republic of North Macedonia. The activities focus especially on the problems of environmentally unsafe waste disposal at municipal non-standard landfills, which urgently need to be closed, and new regional waste management centres need to be established. In addition, the NWMP 2020-2030 aims to regulate the management of industrial and medical waste as well as the special waste streams.

In the context of the approximation of the Republic of North Macedonia and alignment with the EU goals for introducing the circular economy, this planning document also provides a framework of measures, and envisages a period in which these activities could move forward in the country.

Other legislative and strategic documents in regarding circular economy

- »» Plan for Prevention of Waste Generation was recently adopted (2020-2030),
- »» Program for Packaging Waste Management (2011-2020),
- »» Law on Packaging and Packaging Waste Management (2009) – new law yet to be adopted in 2020,
- »» Law on batteries and accumulators waste management (2010) – new law yet to be adopted in 2020,
- »» Law on electrical and electronic equipment waste management (2012) – new law yet to be adopted in 2020,
- »» Regional and local waste management plans,
- »» Draft Law on Extended Producer Responsibility for Management of Special Waste Streams (2019).

Main obstacles for the transition to the circular economy

The lack of reliable data limits the accuracy and reliability of any planning process and makes it impossible to measure the performance effectively. Economic incentives to promote recycling are still limited, and the lack of an organised extended producer responsibility scheme is hindering the market. In practice, there is no mechanism to verify and crosscheck the quality of the data supplied, as different official sources provide different numbers.

In 2019, the Republic of North Macedonia had 43 active municipal communal non-standard landfills. Only two of these landfills – the Drisla landfill in Skopje and the landfill in Gevgelija – have a permit by the MoEPP as sanitary landfills. Large quantities of the communal waste (solid and biodegradable) still end up at more than 1000 illegal dumpsites. Besides, only few of the communal non-standard landfills have equipment for measuring the weight of the deposited waste, which means that there is no way to accurately record the amount of waste which is deposited at the landfill, let alone to quantify it by type of waste (for example, food waste).

Macedonia is choking in organic waste which can be used for alternative energy sources.

Therefore, the maximum commitment for selection and recycling of this type of waste is required.

Every year, when scrubbing trees and public green areas in the cities and towns, huge quantities of waste wood mass are created and unnecessarily end up in landfills.

Activities implemented by the Balkan Bridges

- » promoting the actions towards reducing food waste with Foodbank Macedonia,
- » recognising the need of increasing the green areas to improve the conditions of the ambient air quality in the urban areas in our country. (The ENV.net team from Macedonia in cooperation with EKO-life and the local administration from Kavadarci, planted more than 200 trees on the 18th of November 2020.),
- » “Produce-Use-Recycle-Reuse!” project, awarded under the ENV.net project sub-granting call in the Republic of North Macedonia.

MONTENEGRO

Switching to natural materials, eco-innovation and education is one of the key actions towards the circular economy.

Data on municipal waste in Montenegro are unreliable and inconsistent. These data-related shortcomings are recognised in the National Plan for Waste Management 2015-2020. For instance, concerning the waste management, even though there are legal provisions, the data is inconsistent. According to the MONSTAT (Statistical Office of Montenegro) the total amount of the collected communal waste for 2017 is 292.762 tonnes. According to the Ministry for Sustainable Development and Tourism, the total amount of the collected communal waste in 2017 is 254.523 tonnes. It means that there is no standardised methodology between relevant institutions for collecting data regarding the waste management.

In Montenegro, the process of a selective waste disposal is at an early level. Based on the available data from the total of 19 municipalities in Montenegro, only five municipalities state the share of a separate recycling fraction (Podgorica, Kotor, Herceg Novi, Tivat and Bar), and a negligibly small share is stated in the planning documents of the municipalities of Mojkovac and Kolasin.

10% of the total amount of municipal waste is reused or recycled

- 154,973 tonnes of municipal waste were deposited at landfills (about 61%),
- 50,147 tonnes of municipal waste are temporarily stored (about 20%),
- 4 416 tonnes of primary and secondary selection for reuse and recycling are separated.

There are two sanitary landfills in Montenegro (Livade and Možura) which meet the European standards. A major challenge for most local governments is unregulated landfills, especially landfills which have been in use for ten years now and need to be rehabilitated. According to the findings in Montenegro, there are 373 unregulated landfills, which include temporary landfills where some municipalities still dispose of waste, but also larger landfills which have been used and need to be rehabilitated.

Activities made towards reducing waste

In Podgorica, the capital, a primary waste selection project is being implemented. This system involves sorting the waste at the place of its generation into two containers.

The container for the „dry“ fraction is intended for the disposal of paper, cardboard, plastic, metal and glass, while the container for the „wet“ fraction is intended for the disposal of all types of municipal waste which are not contained in the dry fraction of municipal waste (mainly wet due to the presence of food residues, substances of organic origin, garden waste, hygiene products, etc.), not including bulky waste and edible oils and fats. The results are still unsatisfactory, primarily due to the low awareness of citizens, and also due to the lack of the infrastructure.

Legislation

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030, which fully transposes the UN Agenda 2030, recognised the importance of the transition to the circular economy. One of the main goals of this strategic document is: „Improve waste management applying the circular economy-based approaches“ as priority number one. Besides the National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030, the concept of the circular economy is recognised in the proposal of the Law on Waste Management (Official Gazette of Montenegro, 64/2011). In the new proposal of the draft of the Law on Waste Management are partially transposed the amended directives which are in the circular economy package, especially in terms of percentage of recycling rate. The preparation of the new Law on Waste Management was planned for the end of 2018 but still, it has not been prepared and adopted. The new Law on Waste Management will transpose amendments directives, which are part of the Circular Economy package.

Main obstacles for the transition to the circular economy

The main obstacles are primarily the lack of legal bases, key documents, financial resources and infrastructure. Also, there is slow dynamics when it comes to solving this issue.

Waste management financing

Most of the funding comes from the state budget of Montenegro, another part is provided through the IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) funds.

Circular economy activities by the Green Home

Primarily, we worked on raising citizens' awareness of the very concept of the circular economy. In addition, on several occasions, we discussed this topic with representatives of relevant institutions and prepared various documents analysing the situation and presenting potential solutions

SERBIA

There is a growing interest in the topic of the circular economy. Media mostly mention waste management and this needs change, just like many other issues regarding the transition to the circular economy.

In 2019, the amount of municipal waste in Serbia was 2,46 mil. tonnes, 0,33 t/cap/year. The total waste generation for all waste categories in 2019 was about 11,9 mil. tonnes.*

*Note: We need to emphasise that relevant data available are incomplete, including some of the official ones.

In 2018, the municipal waste recycling rate was at the level of 3% (in 2018), the recycling rate for a packaging waste was 35-40%. The majority of generated municipal waste is placed into landfills (about 2 mil. tonnes in 2019). There are no facilities for the treatment of organic municipal waste (about 50% of municipal waste is an organic waste).

There is no waste incineration plant in Serbia.

In Serbia, there are three cement kilns; two out of three cement plants substitute fossil fuels with some specific waste (at an average rate at about 20%) to recover energy and to obtain raw materials for the production of cement.

Waste separation at the municipal level is not sufficiently developed, only in some towns and cities, there is infrastructure, and there are some facilities for waste separation of recyclable waste. For recycling, there are some registered facilities for recycling of metal, plastic, PET, etc.

The potential of material recycling is 72% for paper and cardboard, 35% for metal, 25% for plastic, 22% for glass, 20% for wood. Also, there are options for some specific waste recycling.

The City of Belgrade is currently building a landfill. Waste to energy facility is expected to start in 2021.

There are nine regional sanitary landfills and two municipal landfills (plus two regional landfills under construction). There exist 137 non-compliant municipal landfills (operated by public utility companies), a number of illegal (non-controlled) dumpsites (for about 20% of generated municipal waste). It is noted that there are more 2000 such sites of different sizes.

Activities made towards reducing waste

- » publication of the Third Communication on Engagement of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia in accordance with ten UN Global Compact principles for the period of January 2018 – June 2019,
- » Mikser festival 2019 with the topic of the circular economy "CIRCULATE" ("CIRKULIŠI"),
- » Green Public Procurement through a stakeholder synergy; the overall goal is to contribute to the development and fostering of the green public procurement (GPP) in Serbia by building capacities of CSOs to support public authorities to engage in GPP,
- » Fashion Sustainability Day at the Belgrade Fashion Week,
- » Road map for accelerating the transition to the circular economy in the Danube region,
- » national mirror committee for the circular economy,
- » shadow report to the Agenda 2030 Voluntary National Report,
- » ex-ante impact assessment for the circular economy policy.

Legislation

The ex-ante impact assessment for the circular economy policy is completed in 2020, as well as another UNDP-supported publication entitled the Roadmap for the Circular Economy in Serbia.

Serbia is a candidate country for an EU membership; in January 2020, Serbia presented its Negotiating Position for Chapter 27. The COM is preparing a draft EU common position (within the negotiation position. There is a plan on how and when Serbia, through a set of Directives Specific Implementation Plans, will implement all the EU member countries obligations); the negotiation position for Chapter 27 is under a „limited“ sign, and it will be this way until Chapter 27 opens for negotiation. For waste management, Serbia is requesting a transitional period.

The relevant strategy is the National Strategy for Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Goods (2012-2022), which contains some elements relevant for the circular economy. However, this strategy has not approved an action plan for the implementation. Although, in line with the EU acquis, Serbia has had waste management strategy documents since 2003, now, in 2020, the latest strategy is still not legally valid. An updated/new public policy document for waste management, as well as a new/updated Law on Waste Management, in line with EU acquis related to the circular economy and waste management, is expected in 2020 (more realistically in 2021).

Main obstacles for the transition to the circular economy

- » use of natural resources and the circular economy concept are not a national priority or a strategic goal (currently only indirectly as a priority for the EU accession),
- » no integrated approach is in place (the circular economy is relevant to all sectors of the economy, not only for the waste management); limited multi-sectoral approach and connection,
- » appropriate and adequate waste management policy related to the circular economy,
- » means of financing by all sources (often financing unsustainable recourse management models),
- » capacities, primarily at the local level and in the business sector,
- » limited awareness-raising and education on the circular economy topics and the green agenda, including focusing on educating the young people,
- » more strict enforcement of the environmental policy framework in key economic and sectoral policies (such as a proper implementation of the strategic impact assessment, environmental impact assessment, industrial directives, investment tools).

Waste management financing

Waste management financing is provided at the local level. According to the knowledge of the EASD, different modalities apply. For example, four (of eight) regional landfills are public-private partnerships and four are public.

Circular economy activities by the EASD

Before the ENV.net3 project, where the circular economy was selected as one of the topics, environmental ambassadors have worked with some companies in Serbia (Tetra Pak, RECAN Foundation, C&A Foundation). The companies supported the Eco-schools Serbia network in their pioneer efforts to promote and turn daily activities towards the direction of the circular economy. Thus, since 2013, the Eco-schools Serbia network has been raising awareness of the local communities on how to deal with resources in a sustainable way. They also focused on the promotion of reusing of different materials, especially beverage cardboards, metal and textile. These activities resulted in strengthening institutions working with children and adults with special needs. It has helped develop skills and entrepreneurship and generate income.

The first regional conference on the circular economy in the frame of the ENV.net project was held in October 2018 in Belgrade, with participation of all ENV.net partners, as well as relevant experts, institutions, and national and international organisations which had already run projects and/or initiatives focused on the circular economy.

The EASD also initiated an update of the National Strategy for Sustainable Use of Natural Resources in the form of the National Sustainable Use of Natural Resources Plan. This was a joint activity of the EASD and National Convention on the EU. The proposal to innovate and to rethink the National Strategy for Sustainable Use of Natural Resources was addressed to the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia.

The EASD analysed and mapped the circular economy in Serbia entitled „Circular Economy in Serbia: The process started“, which was published in 2019. According to the statistic which we track and follow, this publication in English has been read 109 times at the ResearchGate. the same publication in Serbian has been read 293 times, also at the ResearchGate. A paper was presented at a scientific conference: 5th Eurasia Waste Management Symposium (EWMS 2020), At: Istanbul, Turkey, Paper title: „Circular Economy Goes Beyond Waste Management“, acknowledgement to ENV.net project

Activities supported by sub-grants

Education Development Centre “Planet”, City of Sombor (project: „The Hive – Circular Economy as a Model of Entrepreneurship for the Youth”)

- » creation of promotional videos and the entire project campaign,
- » promotion and organisation of the action of collecting old textiles in primary and secondary schools in Sombor, sorting it,
- » „Quality Buzz Generator“ Workshops – Going For Responsible Entrepreneurship - young people with intellectual and physical disabilities, with the support from their teachers, create certain usable items using old clothes, materials (two workshops monthly for six months at ŠOSO „Vuk Karadžić“),
- » promotion of the circular economy workshops in four primary and six secondary schools in Sombor – an initiation of a collection of garbage from garments, sorting it and organising workshops for the production of items from collected raw materials in each school,
- » organisation of a lecture on the topic of the circular economy and entrepreneurship in extra-curricular activities in primary and secondary schools with an aim of involving these in their curriculum for the next school year,
- » organisation of sales exhibitions in which objects made at workshops will be presented and sold, and for the purpose of collecting funds for an excursion for young workshop participants,
- » communication with different stakeholders (representatives of local self-government, schools, associations, entrepreneurs, individuals, etc.) to provide support for the establishment of a sustainable social enterprise of young people will use the circular economy principles, which will enable them to be useful members of society as well as useful employees,
- » attendance of a meeting of eco-school coordinators at Zlatibor and organisation of a sales exhibition,
- » furnishing „The Hive“ – the space (obtained by the city of Podgorica) for continuing the work of the social enterprise of young people with intellectual and physical disabilities.

Association Zlatibor Circle, Municipality of Cajetina, (Project: Model of the Circular Economy in the Service of Environmental Protection in the Municipality of Cajetina).

- » raising awareness of citizens of the municipality of Cajetina on the importance of responsible behavior in order to protect the environment through the model of the circular economy,
- » activities on the promotion and engagement of NGOs in campaigning in the local communities, as well as in advocacy issues regarding the importance of the environment and sustainable development,

- » establishment of the Council for Sustainable Development and Education of the Municipality of Čajetina, with involvement of students in primary and secondary schools from the Municipality of Čajetina,
- » educational and promotional activities related to environmental protection and workshops using didactic resources on natural materials to increase the awareness of parents about responsible behaviour, the circular economy and environmental protection,
- » encouraging the concept of renting and making instead of buying toys – the establishment of the Eco Toys Library (a collection of used and a production of new toys made of natural materials),
- » raising awareness of kindergarten employees, and primary and secondary school teachers in the municipality of Čajetina on the activities through which the principles of the circular economy and sustainable development can be presented to pupils,
- » raising awareness of employees in local and regional media about the importance of broadcasting educational and promotional content on the principles of the circular economy and sustainable development and presenting examples of good practice.

Centre of expertise for natural and economic resources (Project: Re-fresh 4EU).

- » development of relevant Analysis as Advocacy Tool (information-based advocacy) – on new methodology for accession cluster “Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity” for Serbia, on monitoring the progress of national environmental legislation, and parallel assessment of existing and new methodology for accession related to Chapter 27,
- » by these above, contributing to the improvement of the creation and implementation of environmental policy in line with the EU, as well as enforcing the intensification of action for climate and environment, including the circular economy (in the current situation of European integration).

In 2020 EASD developed up to date Spotlight Report on Circular Economy in Serbia within the ENV.net3 project. This Report underlined in concluded remarks that the circular economy concept in Serbia remains in its early stage.

TURKEY

Turkey is the largest country included in this guideline with great challenges for shifting towards the circular economy. The big issue is waste management and its rules which are not set up at the national level, but most municipalities have their own waste management systems.

According to 2018 records, Turkey produced 32.2 million tonnes of waste overall per year. It means that waste per capita is approximately 1.16 kg per day.

The average recycling rate of all waste in Turkey is 12,3%. Approximately 22 mil. tonnes of waste go to landfills or are incinerated. The 2018 data shows that there are 2 223 waste disposal and recovery facilities in Turkey.

87,5% of waste goes to landfill facilities (67,2% landfills and 20,3% wild dumpsites). 12,3% of it is sent to waste dumps and recycling facilities, 0,2% is burned in the open area, disposed of by burying and dumping into the stream-land.

The current number of waste landfill facilities is 159.

The number of incineration plants is 40 (seven are active, the capacity is 757.000 tonnes/year, 494.000 tonnes of waste disposed in 2018).

Legislation

The Ministry of Environment and Urbanisation introduced the Zero Waste Project in 2017. The ministry prepared and announced the Zero Waste Management Action Plan in 2019, which includes the strategies and actions to be implemented by 2023.

The project aims to reduce the volume of non-recyclable waste. The Zero Waste Project has started in 2017. The ministry has reported that 18,750 public institutions joined the project, and 126 tonnes of paper and 8,7 tonnes of glass were recycled, while 9,1 tonnes of organic waste had been composted by May 2019.

The capacity and cooperation for sorting, recycling and medical waste treatment has increased. However, an integrated waste management system is necessary in each province and town in Turkey. Importantly, wild dumping sites and landfilling methods still remain problematic in the country. In this respect, Turkey has committed that the current wild dumping sites would be rehabilitated across the country under the National Waste Management Action Plan.

As mentioned above, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanisation announced the National Waste Management Plan in 2019. The vision helps the transition to the circular economy in terms of waste.

After the first year of the project, Turkey continued to fulfil the requirements of the Turkish Regulation on Waste Management, published in an official gazette in 2015, and other legislative obligations. In addition, the Zero Waste Project aims to advance the circular economy in Turkey. Furthermore, the legislation introduced a ban on the free distribution of plastic bags which came into force in January 2019. The project also established a bylaw pathway on zero waste for municipalities, buildings and settlements to be concluded by 2023. Even though there has been progress due to the project, Turkey still needs to revise its consumption patterns - to make sure that all types of waste are classified by their sources and recycled, and to increase public awareness on this issue.

Main obstacles for the transition to the circular economy

During the current transition process, the organisation is facing many barriers, such as financial, technology-based, social, policy-related, market-based and logistics-based barriers:

- » financial incentives of the governments are prepared towards the linear economy,
- » lack of government support for environmentally friendly policies,
- » lack of policies towards a sustainable and circular public procurement,
- » lack of legislation for an efficient circular economy,
- » inadequate incentives discourage enterprises to apply the circular economy,
- » lack of standards for refurbished products,
- » lack of effective recycling policies to achieve quality in waste management; - thus, the reputation of recycled products can be low in consumers' opinion,
- » existing legislation does not support the circular economy in waste management,
- » lack of standards for assessing the performance of the circular economy,
- » lack of the recycling and recovery infrastructure,
- » failure to raise awareness of society on the issues of the circular economy, such as 'reuse/recycle/remanufacture' products,
- » lack of mandatory requirements and responsibilities for manufacturers/suppliers in the field of the circular economy,
- » lack of willingness and awareness of the circular economy in governmental institutions,
- » complex regulatory and legal requirements made it difficult to use and trade waste. In April 2015, the Turkish government adopted a new regulation on waste management, largely based on the EU Waste Framework Directive and the European Commission (EC) decisions on classification of wastes. However, the secondary regulation related to the Turkish

waste management legislation was complex to understand and implement, which created uncertainty for companies and disincentivised efforts toward the use and trade of secondary raw materials.

Municipal waste management financing

Since municipalities are the main responsible entities for waste management, the necessary financing must be provided from the municipality budget. Municipalities use 40% of their budget for cleaning services including waste handling and landfilling.

Due to inadequacy of municipal resources, an environmental clean-up tax was introduced with an arrangement dated of 1993 for the users of domiciles, offices and other buildings benefiting from municipal waste collection services. However, the tax and other revenues, generated by these services, are at a very low level. Besides, there is no obligation for this tax to be used for the services to which it is related.

Circular economy activities by the Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion (TEMA)

- »» The Circular Economy Meeting held on the 27th of May 2019, TEMA Foundation Headquarters, Istanbul,
- »» Ellen Macarthur, Re-thinking Progress Video (Dubbing Effecting, Feature Video Footage), [-to raise awareness on this issue in society],
- »» monitoring the related legislation and preparing the country-specific report on the circular economy,
- »» in the zerowaste project, studies are carried out by the education department and educational games and videos are created [TEMA Foundation],
- »» the foundation provides internal training on the circular economy,
- »» participating in training sessions held by organisations which conduct studies on the circular economy,
- »» ÇEVSAM, one of the subgrantees of the TEMA Foundation, organised a circular economy workshop,
- »» activities to be held about the circular economy in the upcoming period:
 - » creation of a circular economy brochure booklet, organisation of a conference,
- »» activities supported through sub-grants,
- »» ÇEVSAM, one of the subgrantees of the TEMA Foundation, organised a circular economy workshop.

5. BEST PRACTICES FROM THE EU COUNTRIES

Any organisation willing to make a change in the field, in which it operates, needs some good examples from other organisations. In the field of initiating the transition to the circular economy, this is no exception.

Since the first Circular Economy Action Plan was accepted, many organisations all around the world have started their actions. We bring a few examples of European organisations from different countries, various backgrounds and implemented actions as an inspiration for countries in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

European Environnemental Bureau (EEB), secretariat based in Brussels, Belgium

<https://eeb.org>

The EEB is the largest network of environmental citizens' organisations in Europe. It currently consists of over 160 member organisations in more than 35 countries (all EU member states plus some accession and neighbouring countries), including a growing number of European networks, and representing around 30 million individual members and supporters.

The EEB tackles Europe's most pressing environmental problems by agenda-setting, monitoring, advising on and influencing the ways in which the EU deals with the issues.

These include issues such as climate change, biodiversity, circular economy, air, water, soil, chemical pollution, as well as policies on industry, energy, agriculture, product design and waste prevention, among others.

The EEB is a founding member of the Coolproducts, Right to Repair and Wardrobe Change campaigns.

The EEB is an official member of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform promoted by the European Commission.

EEB is very active in promoting and accelerating the circular economy:

<https://eeb.org/work-areas/resource-efficiency/circular-economy/>

While the primary focus of the EEB's work is on the EU and its decision-making processes, the organisation also works on wider regional and global processes at the level of the UN and the OECD, in particular on the Global Agenda for Sustainable Development. Further, with the enlargement of the European Union, the EEB has increased its cooperation with Eastern European environmental organisations, helping them use European regulations to strengthen their national environmental policies.

Punto Sud, Milan, Italy

<https://www.puntosud.org>

Since 1999, as a non-profit organisation, Punto Sud has been working in the field of international development cooperation to identify and test new ideas for solving social problems, both in Italy and worldwide.

- »» INCUBATION OF IDEAS – study, identify and develop models of social innovation,
- »» PROJECTS – implementation and co-designing initiatives in multi-stakeholder partnerships,

- » RESEARCH & EVALUATION – research and evaluation studies to contribute to disseminating best practices,
- » ACADEMY – training the organisations and humanitarian aid workers.

Punto Sud tests and disseminates effective solutions to meet local and global social needs, implementing projects in the following areas: civil society, social business and economic growth, environment, social inclusion, good donorship, and migration.

Zero Waste Europe, Brussels (Belgium)

Zero Waste Europe is a leading and fast-growing movement of communities, local leaders, businesses, experts, influencers and other “change agents” working towards the same vision: eliminating waste in our society.

Zero Waste Europe connects and supports a vibrant network of 31 national and local NGOs promoting the Zero Waste strategy as a way to make Europe more sustainable. Local groups are responsible for promoting Zero Waste, managing and monitoring the network of Zero Waste municipalities, and engaging with companies and decision-makers.

To become a member of Zero Waste Europe, an organisation has to agree with the ZWE principles and the Zero Waste hierarchy. Zero Waste Europe is very active in different fields and issues regarding the circular economy:

- » waste policies,
- » cities and communities,
- » consumption and production,
- » climate energy and air pollution,
- » break free from plastic,
- » chemical recycling,
- » waste trade.

Right to Repair

<https://repair.eu>

Right to Repair is a coalition of European organisations active around the issue of repair. They are based in several European countries and represent community repair groups, social economy actors, self-repair, and any citizen who would like to advocate for their right to repair.

Right to Repair focuses on:

- » informing citizens and consumers about the opportunities and barriers to their right to repair,
- » involving them in campaigning and helping them recognise that we have the power to make a positive change for the planet and communities.

The organisation advocates for the universal right to repair and ambitious policy measures to achieve it through:

- » access to repair information and spare parts for all – not just professionals,
- » bringing urgency to policymakers on the need for more repairable and longer-lasting products, at both the national and European level,
- » obtaining an EU-wide repair labelling system to guide consumers towards durable, repairable products,

- » enforcing our network of supporting member states and business partners,
- » promoting repair beyond the EU to accelerate market transformation at the global level.

Ellen MacArthur Foundation, London, Great Britain

<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org>

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation is a UK registered charity which aims to inspire a generation to re-think, re-design and build a positive future through the framework of the circular economy. Their mission is to accelerate the transition to the circular economy worldwide.

The foundation works with and inspires businesses, academia, policymakers, and institutions to mobilise systems solutions at scale, globally.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation is one of the leading organisations in topics such as circular fashion, new plastic economy, financing the circular economy, and many others.

Circle Economy, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

<https://www.circle-economy.com>

Although Circle Economy is not an NGO, we selected it as one of the organisations playing very important role in accelerating the circular economy, especially in cities.

The mission of Circle Economy is to empower a global community of businesses, cities and governments to accelerate the transition to the circular economy through practical and scalable insights and solutions which address humanity's greatest challenges. One of the most important tools developed by Circle Economy is a circular city scan. The Circle City Scan is a fact-based innovation and transformation process based on a local multi-stakeholder model which aims to develop practical and scalable solutions in cities to accelerate the transition to the circular economy. Together with city officials, local businesses, and non-governmental change-makers, we identify circular opportunities based on socio-economic and material flow analyses. Considering the city's individual contexts, these opportunities are translated into a visual roadmap for action.

Methabolic, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

<https://www.metabolic.nl>

Methabolic is an organisation striving for system changes. They work to transition the existing global economy as rapidly as possible by working with influential decision-makers to drive sustainability stewardship and organisational change. At the same time, their team works to build parallel systems based on principles which are fundamentally different to the current one, in the form of disruptive new ventures and pilots of new governance and finance models.

Methabolic focuses on the transition to the circular economy on many levels:

- » consultancy, to steward organisational change,
- » institute, to build collective intelligence,
- » ventures arm, to create future infrastructure,
- » software arm, to develop scalable tools,
- » foundation, to empower communities.

RReuse, Brussels, Belgium

<https://www.rreuse.org/>

RREUSE represents social enterprises active in reuse, repair and recycling. RREUSE wants the EU and national governments to move from promoting recycling and waste management only, to putting second-hand products first.

Members of RREUSE employ people at risk of socio-economic exclusion and help bring them back to work. In addition, they bring products back to the market at affordable prices, providing essential household items to low income groups. Approximately 95,000 employees, trainees and volunteers are engaged in the activities of its 27 members across 25 European countries and the USA.

The main activities of the members of RREUSE include:

- » collection, sorting and redistribution of used textiles and clothing,
- » collection, repair and reuse of electrical and electronic waste (WEEE), furniture and other bulky waste,
- » home and community composting projects,
- » charity and second hand shops,
- » collection and recycling of paper, cardboard, wood, plastics, paints, metals, books and toys,
- » awareness raising campaigns, international projects, exchange of best practice and business support.

ACR+, secretariat based in Brussels, Belgium

<https://www.acrplus.org/en/>

The ACR+ is an international network of cities and regions sharing the aim of promoting a sustainable resource management and accelerating the transition towards the circular economy on their territories and beyond.

ACR+ is open to other key players in the field of material resource management such as NGOs, academic institutions, consultancy or private organisations.

The mission of the ACR+ is to contribute on a European and international level to waste prevention and to the ecologically and economically rational waste management, and thus to enhance sustainable development:

- » to contribute to close the cycle of primary and secondary raw materials (resources, products, waste) notably through the promotion of resource savings and a more equitable distribution,
- » to advocate for the transition from a chain economy to a circular economy as the way towards resource efficiency,
- » to create and maintain a network for exchanging information on prevention, selective collection and recycling of waste in urban environments,

- »» to encourage the harmonisation of concepts, definitions and standards in the domain of waste, products and resources,
- »» to promote the creation of multi-stakeholder partnerships,
- »» to develop the expertise and skills of public authorities in effective waste-product-resource policies,
- »» to encourage practical action in waste management and sustainable consumption.

The activities of the network are determined by its members' needs and priorities.

The key activities include **facilitating the exchange of experiences between members, sharing technical and policy information and livening up the network.**

To strengthen the knowledge and capacities of the network and push forward innovation in the field of material resource management, the ACR+ is also involved in **several projects at the European level and in the Mediterranean region, in cooperation with its members.**

ECN, secretariat based in Bochum, Germany

<https://www.compostnetwork.info/>

The European Compost Network is a membership organisation with 64 members from 26 European countries. Members include all European bio-waste organisations and their operating plants, research, policy-making, consultants and authorities.

Via the member organisations, the ECN represents more than 3000 experts and plant operators with more than 45 million tonnes of biological waste treatment capacity.

The objectives and the main focus of the ECN are to promote corresponding visions and the adoption of sustainable systems for organic waste management through integration of strategies, technological development and improvement of practices:

- »» FAVOURABLE LEGAL FRAMEWORK – EUROPEAN POLICY
to achieve an EU legal framework that supports separate collection, biological treatment of organic residues and production and use of quality assured compost and digestate products,
- »» MARKET DEVELOPMENT
to achieve favourable market conditions across Europe for separate collection, biological treatment and use of compost & digestate products,
- »» IMPLEMENTING QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEMES
to achieve Europe-wide implementation of compost and digestate quality assurance schemes, use ECN-QAS as a benchmark,
- »» KNOWLEDGE SHAREPOINT
to increase knowledge and know-how amongst – stakeholders via networking platforms, information dissemination, educational campaigns, etc.,
- »» MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
the ECN is the leading European membership organisation on management of organic resources, representing all relevant stakeholder groups across Europe.

INCIEN SK, Bratislava, Slovakia

Institute for the Circular Economy SK <https://www.incienc.sk>

INCIEN SK is a non-governmental organisation which has been developing tools for the circular economy in Slovakia since 2016. INCIEN SK focuses on analysis, bringing data-based solutions for the circular economy stakeholders, such as municipalities, private companies, government, state and regional entities, schools and public.

The organisation is known for helping municipalities develop a more effective waste management. INCIEN SK has also created circular maps of nine biggest cities in Slovakia, which include all places that help citizens prevent waste. The guidelines on waste reduction in city and state administration is a very popular tool for waste prevention in many organisations, including the Office of the President of the Slovak Republic. The organisation helps bring the topic of the circular economy to big event through waste prevention systems. One of the most popular project is Miesta preč (tr. Places Far Away) which maps the places where waste “disappears”, such as incineration plants, recycling facilities, bio-waste facilities and landfills at www.miestaprec.sk.

INCIEN SK is very active in legislative changes and is part of many working groups which create new legislative proposals and strategies regarding the circular economy. INCIEN SK is also a founder of the Slovak Circular Economy Platform. One of the recent topics developed in co-operation with INCIEN CZ is a project focused on developing tolls for a circular procurement.

INCIEN CZ, Prague, Czech Republic

Institute for the Circular Economy CZ <https://incienc.org/about-us/>

INCIEN CZ is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation which focuses on innovative environmental management. Together with their partners, they work on projects which allow the transition from a linear to a circular system. INCIEN is formed by a quickly growing team of Czech creative professionals. The organisation core consists of alumni from the well-known Wageningen University in the Netherlands.

INCIEN CZ focuses on the transition to the circular economy in the private sector and municipalities, and is very well known for its awareness-raising web page ZAJÍMEJ SE (tr. Take an Interest): <https://zajimej.se>, and the annual regional conference ODPAD ZDROJEM (waste as a source).

INCIEN CZ is a sister organisation of INCIEN SK and they co-operate very closely.

WCycle Institut Maribor, Slovenia

<https://wcycle.com>

The WCYCLE Maribor Institute is a project of long-term, development-oriented management of resource/raw material flows in the local and regional area and operates mainly at the basic research and development level. It focuses on research and investment activities of founders and other partners, development and research activities, finding partners, projects and sources of funding, providing professional assistance and bases (technical, legal, financial, etc.) in project preparation, tender applications, implementation and reporting on the implementation of projects, coordination of cooperation between partners, and preparation of relevant consortium and other documents within individual projects, provision of administrative support and other tasks in the field of the circular economy.

Most of its projects focus on making the City of Maribor a circular city.

Circular Change, Ljubljana, Slovenia

<https://www.circularchange.com>

A purpose-driven team, passionate about connecting people who can jointly drive sustainable change. Our existing economic system is not transforming fast enough to ensure the well-being of everyone on our planet. The UN Sustainable Development Goals cannot be reached without true collaboration.

This is where Circular Change sees its contribution – in nourishing dialogue between different stakeholders, promoting new narratives, orchestrating interests, exchanging knowledge and enabling innovation. An open-minded and creative spirit is their compass when addressing the problems they meet along this exciting, cooperative, circular journey.

Circular Change is best known for their annual Circular Change Conference – one of the key European meeting points of circular economy changemakers.

Sunce, Split, Croatia

<https://sunce-st.org>

The Sunce association was founded in 1998 by the group of Split intellectuals as a response to the growing need for an independent and expert body which would offer solutions to environmental issues and nature protection.

Today, Sunce is known, at the national and international level, as one of the leading organisations for the protection of nature and environment in Croatia. Sunce committed to increasing the standards and improvement of environment and nature protection. They encourage the involvement and participation of the public and advocate for the creation of a responsible society conscious connection between people and nature.

Further, their focus is to champion the public's right to a healthy environment and create conservation solutions, as well as the rational use of natural resources for the benefit of all citizens.

In the past years, Sunce has been active in awareness-raising on the tools for accelerating the circular economy.

6. Proposals of activities for acceleration of the circular economy

We compared data on the actions in the Western Balkans and Turkey, and then compared them to the actions implemented by organisations in some of the EU member states. It is possible to say that most of the actions are very similar but different at different levels. In countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey, most of the activities are implemented on a volunteer basis without particular regulations on the national level.

Develop circular economy strategies and legislation on the national and regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working on legislation preparation, • creating working groups including NGO's, industry, municipalities, ministries, the government, • setting up round tables on certain topics, • bring best practices from abroad on how certain regulations change results, • creating tools for a green/circular public procurement.
Industrial policy review and cooperation with the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mapping waste management and recycling strategies and infrastructure, • creating good case practices, • creating circular platforms, • regional cooperation in prevention of plastic pollution, • creating zero waste concepts for administration and industry, • innovation projects promotion.
Cooperation with municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste management analysis of residual waste and sorted waste, • introducing and implementing organic waste collection systems, • circular city scans, • door to door collection, • waste collection management strategies and infrastructure, • 'pay as you throw' system development, • smart solutions for waste data collection, • creating circular maps of cities, • creating guidelines for citizens on waste prevention and waste sorting.
Studies on certain topics	<p>Studies regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new plastic economy, • reducing plastic waste, • microplastic, • bioplastic, • textile industry challenges, • waste management systems in cities/regions, • food waste prevention.

Consumer awareness initiatives (e.g. reduce, reuse, repair)

- launch of a website with regular blog about the circular economy in everyday life,
- regional, national and international events with topics of the circular economy,
- implementation of the circular economy principles into the events,
- workshops on repairing, reusing, clothes SWAPs,
- events promoting local and circular designs,
- shared economy promotion in the field of transport,
- starting a library of things.

Educational activities

- national or regional school programmes with practical excursions to waste management and recycling plants, landfills,
- workshops on repairing, rethinking, reducing and reusing.

7. Conclusion

The circular economy is a very practical tool for protecting our resources and reducing waste. To accelerate the circular economy, it is important that it is present everywhere, in people's everyday lives, whether in transport, reuse, repair, waste prevention, food and consumers behaviours and decision-making about supporting local businesses, circular designs and sustainability every day. This is why the circular economy has to be included everywhere:

PUBLIC



APPLYING
PRINCIPLES OF
THE CIRCULAR
ECONOMY
IN EVERYDAY LIFE

WE HAVE TO WALK
THE TALK

SCHOOLS



TEACHING
THE NEW WAY
OF THINKING
AND LIVING WHICH
IS RESPONSIBLE
TO OUR ENVIRONMENT

EDUCATING THE
FUTURE GENERATIONS

MUNICIPALITIES



SOLUTIONS
FOR MUNICIPALITIES
ACCORDING
TO THE HIERARCHY
OF WASTE
MANAGEMENT

FOCUSING ON
WASTE PREVENTION

INDUSTRY



DESIGN FOR
CIRCULARITY
(D4C)

BUILDING SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY

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Guidelines on the Circular Economy for Countries in the Western Balkans and Turkey



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